



Botanical Illustration: Portfolio of Favorites

Sara Anne Hook

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Biography

- I am a lawyer and a professor with a passion for art and music.
- I have taken courses in drawing, watercolor painting and printmaking as well as several courses in botanical illustration.
- This portfolio represents some of my favorite pieces as I have continued to hone my skills in - and knowledge of - botanical illustration. It encompasses pieces that I created as part of Botanical Illustration I and III through Cornell University as well as Botanical Illustration at the Indianapolis Art Center.
- The portfolio showcases a variety of media, including pencil, colored marker, charcoal and white chalk, dip pen and ink and colored pencil, and is intended to demonstrate my progress during my courses and beyond.

Eggplant in Pencil

- This eggplant was rendered on matte acetate film.
- A very pleasing ground, it resulted in the pencil having a buttery texture and also allowed the image to be traced from the original.
- From an original drawing by Kristy Ann Kutch.



Pear in Pencil

- The simplicity and shape of fruit and vegetables are what I find especially compelling about botanical illustration.
- As part of my courses, I have taken the opportunity to learn more about sumi-e and the differences between Eastern and Western approaches to art.
- Contrast my rendering of a pear (right) with a pear created using traditional sumi-e techniques (left).



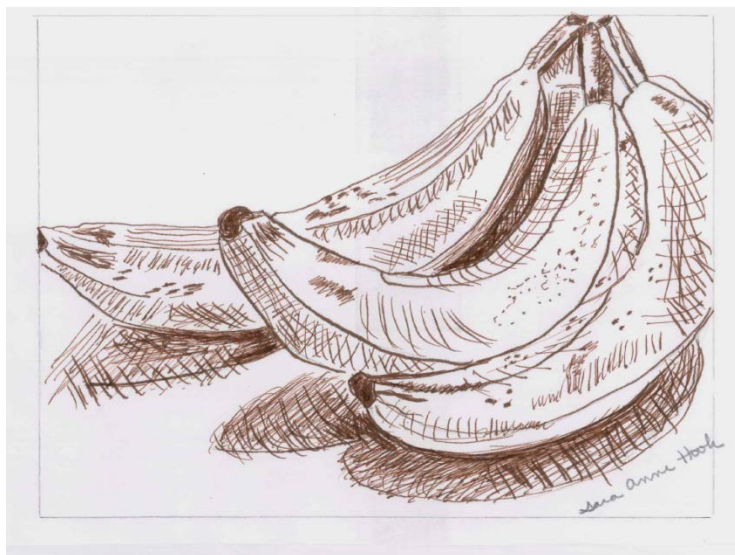
Banana and Pears in Pencil

- A completed drawing of pears and bananas with full shading.
- Notice how the pencil can be used to full advantage to really capture the aesthetic qualities of the fruit as well as its essence or “persona”.



Dip (“Nib”) Pen and Ink

- I chose brown ink instead of black because I thought it provided a softer look. Sometimes black ink can be harsh.
- I also like how brown ink can be used to render the delicacy of dried stems, flowers and leaves during autumn and winter.
- Using a nib pen demands careful mark-making to avoid blots and to strategically render the details using hatching, cross-hatching and stippling.



Charcoal and White Chalk

- Charcoal and chalk are traditional media that have been popular through the centuries.
- Here I used a set of charcoal pencils to render a red and yellow pepper, with highlights using white chalk.
- Charcoal allows us to really appreciate the shape of the peppers, without becoming distracted by their color.



Colored Marker

- Colored marker allows the use of bold colors and lots of layering.
- One issue is to be sure to use a paper that is robust enough to complement the colors and avoid “pilling” as additional layers of color are added.
- Green is one of the most difficult colors to capture and often demands careful blending of blues and grays.
- Here you can see that the color of the apple is more realistic than the pear.



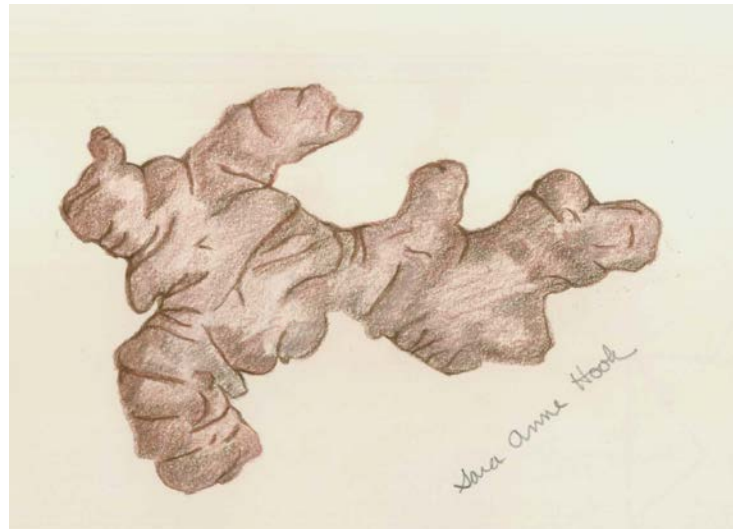
Pear in Colored Pencil

- My favorite medium.
- Colored pencil has really come into its own over the last few years, thanks to the efforts of the dedicated members of the Colored Pencil Society of America, which hosts an annual conference, competitions and exhibitions, publishes a professional journal (*To The Point*) and advocates for improvements in art materials, including lightfastness.
- From an original by Agathe Ravet-Haeevermans



Ginger Root in Colored Pencil

- Roots can be beautiful!
- Here is a ginger root rendered in colored pencil using a limited palette of colors.
- The purpose of this drawing was to show how the outline of an object can be drawn in colored pencil and then blended in.



More Colored Pencil

- Rose
- Mushroom
- Iris
- Note the mark-making, blending of related and complementary colors, layering and burnishing, all of which are the hallmarks of working with colored pencil.



- From an original by Jackie Simmonds

Still Life

- A classic still life creates a pleasing combination of similar or diverse items that can include leaves, flowers, fruit or vegetables.
- Here are some favorite things from my office, complemented by sprigs of pine needles.



For More Information



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